

INTIMATIONS

NOW READY

THE
CHRONICLE AND DIRECTORY
OF
CHINA, JAPAN, STRAITS, &c., &c.,
1898.

With which is incorporated
THE CHINA DIRECTORY.

This is the
THIRTY-FOURTH ANNUAL ISSUE
and will be found, as usual, to show an advance
in the preceding years both in fulness and accuracy
of information.

THE DIRECTORY covers the whole of the
ports and cities of the Far East from Peking to
Melbourne, in which European reside.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LIMITED.

ESTABLISHED A.D. 1841.

WINES AND SPIRITS.

ALL these are selected by our London
house, brought direct at first hand, imported in
good and solid bottles by ourselves, thus saving all
intermediate profits, and enabling us to supply
the best goods at MODERATE PRICES.

PRICE LISTS, with Full Details, to be
had on Application.

PORT after removal should be rested a
month before use. When required for
drinking at once it should be ordered to be
decanted at the Dispensary, before being
sent out.

SHERRY—Excellent Dinner and After
Dinner Wines of very superior Vintage.
All are true Xeres Wines.

BLANKET—Our Blankets, including the lowest
prices, are guaranteed to be the genuine
product of the jute of the grape and are
not artificially made from various
currents, as is generally the case with
Cheap Wines.

BRANDY—All our Brandy is guaranteed to
be pure Cognac, the difference in price
being merely a question of age and
vintage.

WHISKY—All our Whisky is of excellent
quality and of greater age than most
brands in the market. The Scotch
Whisky marked "E" is universally
popular, and is pronounced by the best
local connoisseurs to be superior to any
other brand in the Hongkong market.

We only guarantee our Wines and Spirits
to be genuine when bought direct from us in
the Colony or from our authorized Agents at
the Coast Ports.

A. S. WATSON & CO., LIMITED.

THE HONGKONG DISPENSARY.
Hongkong, 9th January, 1898.

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.
Our communications relating to the various columns
should be addressed to THE EDITOR.
Correspondents must forward their names and address
with communications, addressed to THE EDITOR, not
for publication, but as evidence of good faith.
All letters for publication must be written on one
side of the paper only.
To correspondents signed communications that have
already appeared in other papers will be inserted.

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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, APRIL 9th, 1898.

THE report that a secret treaty has been
concluded between China and Russia is
being met with incredulity by our Shanghai
morning contemporaries, though not with
any great confidence or apparently on any
first class authority. His only authority
appears to be Chinese rumour or report, but
concerning the mission of Li HUNG-CHANG
he is somewhat more explicit and positive.
He says—"It is positively denied that the
ex-Viceroy Li goes with any authority to
sign, ratify, or exchange any such treaty
[as the reported secret treaty]; he
proceeds to Russia simply and solely in
connection with the coronation." The
Chinese say the EMPEROR would never have
deputed Li HUNG-CHANG to conduct such
a measure after the fiasco of the Japanese
war. This may or may not be true, but
whatever may have been the case in connection
with the conduct of the war, we fail to
see that the veteran Viceroy made any
fiasco of the peace negotiations. He more
than any man was certainly responsible for
the state of unpreparedness in which the
war found China. He it was who urged
the troops with worthless rifles of various
calibres, obsolete in design and supplied
with cartridges that would not fit; he was
the creator and maintainer of the fleet, responsible
for its existence and its numerous
defects; and it was at his direction that the
forts were erected and armed with guns
more or less unsuitable and manned by
coolies who knew nothing of the working of
artillery. To some extent this deplorable
all round failure was the fault of the system
of administration, but Li HUNG-CHANG had
large powers and used them freely. The
material was purchased, but of the money
voted how much really reached the munition
factories? Li himself has grown rich
beyond the dreams of the most illustrious
aristocrat, and his relatives and creatures have
simply fattened on contracts and success.

The marvel is not that so little was achieved
during the war by the Chinese forces as that
they after made any stand at all. A certain
number of war vessels, of heavy guns, and
of arms for the troops had been collected,
but there was no system, and every branch
of the public service—such as it was—was
honeycombed with corruption.

Even if Li HUNG-CHANG had been an
honest administrator instead of a quibbling
mandarin, it may fairly be doubted

whether the result of the Chinese preparations
would have been different in the end.
The Chinese are neither good administrators
nor good fighters. They possess neither
method nor organization, nor are they
amenable to discipline. CHANG CHU-
RONG is an instance of how little even an
honest official can achieve. He is, and we
think rightly, credited with being
indifferent to money and is reputed to be
a bitter opponent of the squandering
practices of the officials. But his ven-
tures, though undertaken from patriotic
motives, and so far as he is concerned,
honestly conducted, have not been con-
spicuously successful. Rather the reverse in
fact. He also is impractical and unmethod-
ical, and his enterprises have in consequence
languished for the most part or proved only
qualified successes. What the astute Li
failed to accomplish the patriotic CHANG
would equally, we feel sure, have been
unable to achieve, and for the most part
very similar results. It is quite possible
that had CHANG conducted the negotiations
at Shimoneki he would not have suc-
ceeded in securing such good terms for
his country. No doubt, the veteran ex-
Viceroy of Chihli owed no little portion
of his success to the bullet in his would-be
assassin—an unfortunate episode which
rendered the Japanese more disposed to
concede to the victim of the attack—but it
cannot be denied that he showed throughout
the negotiations the craft and subtlety for
which he has always been famous. He con-
sented, it is true, to the cession of Formosa,
for that was inevitable, and to that of the
Liaoting peninsula, but who will say he had
not already counted on Russian intervention
in connection with the latter? On the other
hand, he induced the Japanese Commissioner
to forego all the more important commercial
concessions first demanded, although he was
in a position to insist upon them all. The
vily old Celestial, who thoroughly outwitted
Captain FOURNIEUX and other French diplo-
mats, had lost nothing of his cunning when
he went to China's former foe to Japan to
endeavour to obtain peace without too vast
a sacrifice of life and specie.

Whether or not Li HUNG-CHANG has gone
to Russia, as stated, simply and solely to
represent his Imperial Master at the Cor-
onation of the Czar NICOLAS II, we cannot
pretend to say. There may be some secret
understanding between Russia and China
with reference to the Trans-Siberian Rail-
way, and it is quite possible that the Chinese
have tacitly agreed to make, or allow to be
made, a railway through Manchuria to
connect with it to a port on the Yellow
Sea. This is possible; but the Chinese have
no political gratitude, and they are given to
distrust professed friends equally with open
enemies. They never yield anything except
to forceful pressure, and are far more likely
to make concessions under a sense of favour
to come than from recollection of past
services, especially when these have been
rendered from obviously selfish motives.
The probabilities are all against Li having
been despatched on his present mission with
any ulterior aim. Yet the appointment is
rather remarkable and noteworthy for more
reasons than one. His Excellency is now
in advanced years and in somewhat infirm
health. He occupies a most important
office as Grand Secretary of the Council,
and as the adviser of the Emperor on all
matters connected with Foreign Affairs
stands in a unique position. Nevertheless
this seemingly indispensable counsellor has
been spared at a more or less critical period
in China's foreign relations. Why, it may
be asked, was not a Manchurian Prince deputed
on this occasion to represent the Emperor
KWANG SU at Moscow? The Emperor of
Japan will be represented by a Prince of
the Blood, one of the ablest and most dis-
tinguished of the Imperial Family. Could not
the Czar equal honour? She has
sent her most renowned statesman, but it
would have been more significant of an
intention to treat Russia on an equality had Prince
KUNG been despatched to Moscow to be present
at the coronation ceremony. There may
have been some object in the appoint-
ment of Li HUNG-CHANG to Russia on this
occasion that is not generally suspected.
The veteran ex-Viceroy is still the trusted
adviser of his sovereign. He may have
gone to Russia to see something more than
the coronation. He may have been deputed
to take stock of the country and its apparent
resources, to note for the Peking Govern-
ment what manner of Power this great
neighbour of theirs really is; to try
and detect its weaknesses as well as to as-
certain its strength. Who can tell? One
thing at least we know: namely, that the
Chinese Ambassadors have not lived in
Europe and America for nothing. It is
true their country has profited little from
any knowledge of Western civilization they
have gained; but their Government has
learned how to play upon the jealousies and
take advantage of the weaknesses of the
Western Powers through the knowledge
and experience garnered by its Repre-
sentatives.

There were eleven cases of plague yesterday.
The total for the year is now 426.

The Austrian Lloyd's steamer *María Victoria*
left Singapore for this port yesterday morning.

The Richemont Line steamer *Deux Richemont*
from Europe left Singapore on Tuesday for this
port and may be expected here on the 14th inst.

The M. M. steamer *Sydney*, with the French
mail of the 13th March, left Singapore on
Tuesday, the 7th inst. at 5 p.m., and may be
expected here on or about Tuesday, the 14th
inst.

We are indebted to the Spanish Consul for a
copy of the following telegram received from
the Manila Observatory—Buenos Aires, 7th April,
7.45 p.m. There is a depression to the E. of
Luzon in the Pacific.

The course for the Royal Hongkong Yacht
Club's boat on Sunday will be from the Police
Pier, Kowloon, round Kowloon Rock, Chaiwan
Pier, Kowloon, off the (leaving all at Kowloon),
twice round, 18 miles.

Shortly after four o'clock yesterday morning
a fire broke out on the first floor of 12, Wing
Street, a three-story building. The fire
was quickly in attendance and succeeded
in keeping the flames within the first and second
floors, both of which are family houses. These
floors were gutted, but the ground floor was
guiltless through a jump falling from a nail in
a partition. The master of the first floor was
formerly an interpreter at the Police Court. He
says his place is insured, but he does not know
to what the policy is at Kowloon City,
where he was at the time of the outbreak.

THE HONGKONG DAILY PRESS, FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 1898.

News was received yesterday that the District
Attorney General had been appointed to the
post of Attorney General for Hongkong.
The Hon. Mr. Justice Maunsell had been
appointed to the post of District Attorney
General for Hongkong.

The Sanitary Board meets this afternoon.
The following is the agenda of the meeting:
1. Report of the Sanitary Board for the year
1897.
2. Report of the Sanitary Board for the year
1898.
3. Report of the Sanitary Board for the year
1899.

The Willard Ocean Company presented "The
Trip to Chicago" on Tuesday night. The trip
of course is made as funny as it is possible
for Mr. Sheridan. The audience enjoyed it
very much. The comedy was presented at
the Theatre Royal, and was very successful.
The comedy was presented at the Theatre Royal,
and was very successful.

In connection with the recent prosecution for
murder at the Police Court, the following is
the official certificate which was issued by
the Police Commissioner. The certificate was
issued by the Police Commissioner, and was
issued by the Police Commissioner.

Sir Robert Hart, Inspector General of Customs,
the United States, has been appointed to the
post of Inspector General of Customs for Hongkong.

The Hon. Mr. Justice Maunsell has been appointed
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The Hon. Mr. Justice

